

Application No. 09/911,840

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the present application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remains under examination in the application are presented below. The claims are presented in ascending order and each includes one status identifier. Those claims not cancelled or withdrawn but amended by the current amendment utilize the following notations for amendment: 1. deleted matter is shown by strikethrough for six or more characters and double brackets for five or less characters; and 2. added matter is shown by underlining.

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) A meter end point encoder transmitter device, wherein the device is operably coupled to a utility meter that forms part of a utility meter reading system, the device comprising:

a radio frequency sub-system that transmits consumption data from the utility meter using frequency hopping spread spectrum signal; and

a digital subsystem, wherein the digital subsystem is powered by a battery and wherein upon nearing a time for the radio frequency sub-system to transmit the digital subsystem directs a charge pump capacitor to charge, and once the charge pump capacitor is charged the digital sub-system enables at least a portion of the radio frequency sub-system to run off the charge pump capacitor during the consumption data transmission.

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9. (Original) The device of claim 8, wherein utilization of the charge pump capacitor by the radio frequency sub-system during transmission limits a drain on the battery.

10. (Original) The device of claim 8, wherein the digital subsystem includes a first low-speed processor and a second high-speed processor, and wherein the first low-speed processor monitors the status of the battery and transfers the status of the battery to the second high-speed processor.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 12,~~ A utility meter reading system, comprising:

a meter end point encoder transmitter device operably connected to a utility meter; and

at least a base unit,

wherein the meter end point encoder transmitter device transmits consumption data to at least the base unit by utilizing frequency hopping spread spectrum and wherein the transmitted consumption data is in the form of a single transmission of a plurality of buckets of data, each of said plurality of buckets representing a different but sequential period of time of consumption data, as measured from a current time of said meter end point encoder transmitter device, from which the base unit may retrieve desired consumption data, wherein the base unit utilizes a

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time and frequency transmission collision avoidance scheme in combination with
the bucket transmission.

14. (Cancelled)